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A brighter future for the CIA

Morale at the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency already is said to be improving, even in these very early days of the Reagan administration.

William Casey, designated by the new president to be CIA director, was a high-ranking officer in the CIA's predecessor, the OSS. He and Congress, too, seem to share the conviction that the CIA is due for an overhaul.

Casey's focus is expected to be on people, whereas Adm. Stansfield Turner, director

during the Carter administration, was fascinated with the agency's technology. Faulty information recently from the Persian Gulf, Central America and Africa did not stem from a lack of intelligence gathering. There was no one capable of analyzing the material.

The agency has suffered from mass firings by Turner, by revelations of the names and addresses of agents and by being forced to operate in a spotlight. A flood of inquiries under the Freedom of Information Act has penetrated the

essential secrecy under which the CIA must operate.

Congress probably will be asked to pass laws exempting the CIA from Freedom of Information demands and making it a criminal offense for past or present CIA employees to release the names of agents or officials.

It is not likely that the CIA will slip from congressional reins completely, but the outlook is for a restoration of pride and confidence in an agency vital to the nation's security.